

BPA hasn't done much recruiting for several years while it has been reducing staff. But the agency has now begun a new recruiting effort. Why now? The simple answer is that BPA needs

people **now** in some job areas. And in the next few years, it will need more people to replace the large number of workers who will retire or leave. The latter comes under succession planning. Staying on top of BPA's people needs is part of our high performing organization (HPO) principles.

With the current workforce age and time, BPA expects shortages in the near future in several job fields. These include engineers, accountants, auditors, computer specialists, administrative support, electricians, substation operators, linemen and craftsmen in power system control and system protection.

It takes a long time to train new people, especially in the hourly

Why is BPA recruiting?



positions. So BPA recruiters are out now recruiting. They are looking for people ready to come to work, and they're building relationships with colleges and training schools as sources for recruits in the future.

Two of BPA's HPO initiatives focus on the recruiting and selection of new employees. The goal is to replenish talent. Recruiting means getting people from a highly qualified and diverse applicant pool to apply. And BPA must be sure to hire qualified people from Equal Employment Opportunity groups available in the labor pool.

Competition is tough for talented people in today's job market. BPA wants to attract the talent it will need to replace the people it loses to retirement. So the agency's new recruiting effort aims to maintain BPA's high quality workforce for the future.

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carry through in evaluating the results of our efforts. We will continue to improve our planning and evaluation efforts in the next year.

Emphasizing manager connection to employees addresses many of the vision elements. It certainly emphasizes that management is focused primarily on employees. Through that focus, we expect that many of the other elements will also be furthered — employees feel connected to the agency's business, contributions are recognized, employee development is supported, the quality and quantity of communications are high. And, perhaps, most important, integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated. Starting this month, we will initiate training that is designed to help even our best managers enhance their skills to support employees. The training will start with a focus on helping employees develop individual development plans

that support the vision elements of supporting employee development.

The whole effort does not, however, rest entirely on the shoulders of performance managers. We have made some agency-wide initiatives as part of the HPO process that should make a difference — the new rewards and recognition program brings more money and more attention to employee accomplishments. Budgeted funds for awards have increased to 3.5 percent of agency salaries this year and will increase another 1.75 percent in 2001. Moreover, we are strongly encouraging nonmonetary recognition as well.

We are making corrections to make systems more fair and open. The most outstanding examples of this are a policy that strongly encourages opening interest announcements to all BPA employees rather than just employees of one business line and developing a new policy that should

result in a dramatic reduction in promotions through accretion.

A commitment has been made to an extensive program that will provide managers training in all areas that support our HPO vision. This training will be initiated this month and all managers are expected to complete training within 18 months. We have also begun to work with the Great Place to Work Institute, which annually develops the list of the 100 best places to work for Forbes magazine. We believe comparing ourselves against the 100 best places to work, all of which are private sector firms, creates a challenging and, hopefully, energizing goal for our entire organization.

Developing systems that seek to create positive organizational culture change is time-consuming and difficult work. But, if it is successful, it can result in an organization that is rewarding and energizing for all employees while enhancing the quality of life for all Northwest citizens.

HPO Chart

It would be nice if BPA management could wave a magic wand and have BPA instantly become a high performing organization. But, because BPA is a large organization,

it takes a vision and an implementation plan.

Sometimes it may seem hard to see how all the planning leads to actual change. The chart below matches up the seven HPO vision elements with some all-but-randomly selected action items from the vice presidents'

performance contracts. The last column on the right lists how the vision elements and action items should translate into the employee work world.

On the whole, employees can trace the influence of the major initiative that puts HPO elements in

the performance contracts of most managers in the agency, starting with the highest. Fifty-one percent of performance managers' performance evaluation is based on HPO activities.

Vision element	Action item	Visible change
Employee development is supported	Managers and direct reports develop personal or group developmental goals or training plans tied to key skills needed to be successful at BPA. Create employee development facilitator to support employees in using self-assessment and development tools and resources to take advantage of realistic profiles of needed key skills and career paths in the PBL. Performance managers offer every TBL employee training and development opportunities.	Training budgets are up and managers will be meeting with employees to talk about development plans.
Contributions are recognized	New recognition plans are in place that include increased monetary and nonmonetary recognition.	The agency-wide recognition budget is up. Expect to see more money in awards and more events recognizing employees for their work.
Employees feel connected with the agency's business strategies	The five principles for decisions are integrated into project management activities throughout BPA. Involve employees in PBL Strategic Plan development and explain decisions on major business decisions. Employees are informed of business line and workgroup goals. Employees can identify how their work relates and contributes to at least one TBL target.	Expect to see more money in awards and more events recognizing employees for their work.
Systems are fair and open	TBL ombuds position established, filled and marketed to employees. Provide fair opportunities for employee advancement by competing promotions and development opportunities under a common set of BPA and PBL guidelines communicated to managers and employees. HPO policies that affect Corporate employees will be discussed by the management team and implemented and communicated in a fair and open manner.	Agency-wide, most interest announcements will be open to all and there will be fewer promotions through accretion. Also expect to hear about staffing plans and announcements of developmental and promotional opportunities.
The quality and quantity of communications are high	(K)orporate newsletter will be published regularly. Vice president will meet with nondirect report managers at least twice a year. Vice president will hold monthly "check-in" sessions open to all staff and will hold monthly "bagels with the boss" sessions with PBL managers, focusing on HPO issues and progress. Managers are provided with tools and resources to communicate efficiently with employees and model open-door policy of accessibility channels.	Expect to see managers a whole lot more often. Employees will have more opportunities to meet with upper management. And, every business line will have its own newsletter.
Management is focused primarily on employees	Tier I, II, and III performance managers have met with direct reports for the purpose of clearly communicating performance expectations; formal performance plans are signed and in place for FY 2000. Reduce spans of control to free up managers to focus on performance management by filling five additional performance manager positions in the PBL organizations where there are currently excessive spans of control. All Corporate managers will complete required managerial training for FY 2000.	Again, expect to see managers more often. And expect them to have more training. Integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated.
Integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated	Manage the HPO Management Council to conclusions that assure timely, efficient delivery of products and a forum to create greater consistency of HPO actions across the agency with strong consideration of employee interests. VPs improve understanding of the daily work functions and increase interactions and partnership time with front lines through immersion training. Develop a "check" that staff and first line managers can fill out to increase VP awareness on specific issues. Tools made available to help managers define and develop integrity and trust skills.	The issue here is primarily at the VP level and higher. Expect to hear more from VPs wanting to know what you do and expect more ways to provide feedback to them.